
AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ABILITY IN PUBLIC SPEAKING AT UNIVERSITAS PGRI PALEMBANG

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ABSTRACT: The objective of this study was to know factors that affect the emergence of fear of public speaking of students' English education at *Universitas PGRI Palembang* in terms of experiencing panic and dread, fearing at the fear itself, and negative beliefs about themselves and the audience. The method of this study was descriptive qualitative analysis. The participants of this study were 40 students of English Education at *Universitas PGRI Palembang* in the Academic Years of 2017/2018. The data were analyzed by checking the respond of the questionnaire and calculating the percentage analysis. Results of the study showed that those factors were experiencing panic and dread in categories feeling shame and feeling being alone, and then perceives something to be a significant danger or threat; fearing at the fear itself in categories pounding heart, trembling/shaking, lightheaded, numbness, and fear of losing control; and negative beliefs about themselves and the audience in categories negative beliefs about themselves and the audience.

Keywords: *students' ability, and public speaking.*

ANALISIS KEMAMPUAN MAHASISWA DALAM BERBICARA DIDEPAN UMUM DI UNIVERSITAS PGRI PALEMBANG

ABSTRAK: Tujuan dari penelitian ini untuk mengetahui faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi munculnya ketakutan berbicara didepan umum pada mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas PGRI Palembang dalam hal mengalami panik dan ketakutan, takut pada rasa takut itu sendiri, keyakinan negatif mengenai diri mereka sendiri dan penonton. Metode dari penelitian ini adalah analisis deskriptif kualitatif. Peserta dari penelitian ini adalah 40 mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas PGRI Palembang Tahun Ajaran 2017/2018. Analisis datanya dengan memeriksa jawaban dari angket dan menghitung persentasi analisis. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa faktor-faktor tersebut adalah mengalami panik dan ketakutan dalam kategori perasaan malu dan merasa sendirian, dan kemudian merasakan sesuatu yang bahaya atau ancaman; takut pada rasa takut itu sendiri dalam kategori jantung berdebar, gemeteran/gegar, pusing, mati rasa, dan takut kehilangan kendali; dan keyakinan negatif mengenai diri mereka sendiri dan penonton dalam kategori keyakinan negatif mengenai diri mereka sendiri dan penonton.

Kata Kunci: *kemampuan mahasiswa, dan berbicara didepan umum.*

INTRODUCTION

People in the world have different ability in public speaking, such as a good speaker; especially a good speaker of English. English is a major language of international. It is not only for communication among native speakers of English, but it is also among non-native speakers. Therefore, it is very important to learn English for communication. Barrass (2006) describes that good communication skills were needed in everyday life, in study at college or university, and in any career based on such studies. Yet, after more than twelve years at school, many students entering higher education were unable to express their thoughts clearly and effectively in their own language. They need to improve their writing and to develop their ability to converse, to discuss, to argue persuasively, and to speak in public. Indeed, employers complain that after a further three years in college or university, many students applying for employment still have poor communication skills (p.1). The statement means that good communication skills were needed in daily life, it includes in study and in

career because it helped people for speaking and expressing their thoughts clearly, correctly and effectively.

According to Miller (2011), “the ability to communicate well is one of the most important skills a person can possess” (p.16). From the statement, it defined that the talent to communicate well was one of the greatest significant skills that owned by someone. Therefore, people should have good communication because it was one of significant skills.

The ability of communication in a foreign language clearly and correctly contributes to the success of learner in school or university and success later in every phase of life. Sayed cited in Al-Tamimi (2014) stated that the ability of speaking became very important in technological age: however, students were still significantly deficient in their ability to make oral presentations (p.45). It means that the ability of speaking was really important, although it was not easy for the students or they had deficient in their ability to speak.

Esposito (2000) notes, “fear of public speaking is reported to be the number one fear in surveys of American adults” (p.7). It defines that fear of

public speaking was the one's problem of fear faced in American adults.

In fact, "experiencing panic and dread of public speaking or performing often creates feelings of shame and a feeling of being alone in your suffering" (Esposito, 2000, p. 4). It can be informed that feelings embarrassed or afraid in public speaking or performing appear because of experiencing panic and dread. Esposito (2000) describes that many people with this fear tried to keep it hidden and suffered in silence. There were many people of all ages and from all walks of life who experience the fear of public speaking or performing. People who had this fear often feel panic when called upon to speak or perform. Their anxiety also showed up in physical symptoms that lead them to feel a loss of control. There was often a fear that their symptoms betrayed them and allowed others to see how frightened they were. Rather than experience tremendous discomfort and risk embarrassment in front of others, many people avoided situations of public speaking or performing as much as possible. This avoidance served to further reinforce the fear (p. 30).

METHODOLOGY

In analyzing the data, the researchers used descriptive qualitative method because all of the data that analyzed in this study were in the form of words, numbers and tables. According to Creswell (2012), "in qualitative research is the best suited to address a research problem in which you do not know the variables and need to explore" (p. 16). Tavakoli (2012) notes that qualitative research was synthetic or holistic (i.e., views the separate parts as a coherent whole), heuristic (i.e., discovers or describes the patterns or relationships), with little or no control and manipulation of the research context, and uses data collection procedures with low explicitness. Qualitative research had roots in a number of different disciplines, principally anthropology, sociology, and philosophy, and is now used in almost all fields of social science inquiry, including applied linguistics. Qualitative research was the primary example of Hypothesis-Generating Research (p.503).

As a descriptive qualitative research, this research has designed to describe students' ability in public

speaking. The data on students' ability in public speaking, researchers obtained from the Students in English Education at *Universitas PGRI Palembang*. Researchers have given the questionnaire to the students that consist of questions of students' ability in public speaking.

Creswell (2014) states that participants' meanings: In the entire qualitative research process, researchers kept a focus on learning the meaning that participants held about the problem or issue, not the meaning that researchers brought to the research or expressed in the literature (p. 234). Participants of this research were 40 students in English education at *Universitas PGRI Palembang*. Researchers chose the students because they have already learned about Public Speaking subject.

The main data of this research was the questionnaire. According to Syahri, Sulaiman and Susanti (2017), "questionnaire is a list of question or statement that given to the sample or respondent's research" (p. 76). The data were collected by distributing questionnaire sheet. Questionnaire sheet was a list to be answered by group of people. Questionnaire sheet was used to

find out fears of public speaking in terms experiencing panic and dread, fearing the fear itself, negative beliefs about themselves and the audience. The questionnaire was adapted from ETS Public Speaking Seminar Survey Pre-Test by Grace Bagunu, assessing public speaking fear with the short form of the Personal Report of Confidence as a Speaker scale: confirmatory factor analyses among a French-speaking community sample by Alexandre Heeren, Grazia Ceschi, David P Valentiner, Vincent Dethier and Pierre Philippot (2013), the Speech Anxiety Thoughts Inventory: scale development and preliminary psychometric data by Yongrae Choa, Jasper A.J. Smits and Michael J. Telch (2003) and measure of EFL Public Speaking Class Anxiety: Scale Development and Preliminary Validation and Reliability, by Kriangkrai Yaikhong & Siriluck Usaha (2012). On the whole, the questionnaire used in this research was 30 items concerning experiencing panic and dread (the first 10 items), fearing the fear itself (the second 10 items), and negative beliefs about themselves and the audiences (the third 10 items). Overall, 30 items were negative. The statements were put into some categories into Likert Scales

(researchers interpreted the data as follows by the responses 1: Strongly Disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neutral, 4: Agree or 5: Strongly Agree), True False Scales (researchers interpreted the data as follows by the responses True (T) or False (F), and A Strength of Belief Rating (I do not believe the statement at all) or (I completely believe the statement)).

Table 1. Experiencing Panic and Dread

| No. | Statements |
|-----|---|
| 1. | I do poorer on speeches just because I am anxious. |
| 2. | I start to panic when I have to speak English without a preparation in advance. |
| 3. | While giving a speech, I get so nervous I forget facts I really know. |
| 4. | My posture feels strained unnatural. |
| 5. | While preparing for giving a speech, I feel tense and nervous. |
| 6. | I am constant fear of forgetting what I prepared to say. |
| 7. | I get anxious if I am asked something about my topic that I don't know. |
| 8. | I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English. |
| 9. | Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while speaking English. |
| 10. | I feel anxious while waiting to give my speech. |

Source: ETS Public Speaking Seminar Survey Pre-Test by Grace Bagunu, and assessing public speaking fear with the short form of the Personal Report of Confidence as a Speaker scale: confirmatory factor analyses among a French-speaking community sample by Alexandre Heeren, Grazia Ceschi, David P

Valentiner, Vincent Dethier and Pierre Philippot (2013).

Table 2. Fearing the fear itself

| No. | Statements |
|-----|--|
| 11. | My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I give a speech. |
| 12. | My hands tremble when I am giving a speech. |
| 13. | My heart beats very quickly just as I start giving a speech. |
| 14. | Certain parts of my body feel tense and rigid while giving a speech. |
| 15. | During an important speech, I experience a feeling of helplessness. |
| 16. | My heart beats very quickly while I present a speech. |
| 17. | My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I speak before the audience. |
| 18. | My hands tremble when I try to handle objects on the platform. |
| 19. | I am fearful and tense all the while I am speaking before a group of people. |
| 20. | I am terrified at the thought of speaking before a group of people. |

Source: ETS Public Speaking Seminar Survey Pre-Test by Grace Bagunu, and the Speech Anxiety Thoughts Inventory: scale development and preliminary psychometric data by Yongrae Choa, Jasper A.J. Smits and Michael J. Telch (2003).

Table 3. Negative beliefs about themselves and the audiences

| No. | Statements |
|-----|--|
| 21. | When I make a mistake, I find it hard to continue in a focused way |
| 22. | My speech won't impress the audience. |
| 23. | I won't be able to speak as well as others. |
| 24. | When others are not paying attention to my speech, I worry |

that the audience is thinking poorly of me.

25. If I perform poorly, then the audience will remember me negatively.

26. If I am anxious in this situation, the audience will not like me.

27. If I don't speak well, the audience will reject me.

28. I will not be able to control my anxiety.

29. I will be unable to give a good speech.

30. My mind will go blank.

Source: ETS Public Speaking Seminar Survey Pre-Test by Grace Bagunu, and measure of EFL Public Speaking Class Anxiety: Scale Development and Preliminary Validation and Reliability, by Kriangkrai Yaikhong & Siriluck Usaha (2012).

The technique for analyzing data was descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis function as a technique used to describe something in detail. According to Syahri, Sulaiman and Susanti (2017), "descriptive research design is a research design used in conducting in-depth research and does not examine the relationship between two or more variables. Descriptive nature, because this type of research does not use action variables (treatment) or treatment" (p. 40). From the statement, it means descriptive study or research needs extensive observation on the data or source based on the questionnaire.

In the analyzing, firstly researchers carefully and critically read participants' responses of the

questionnaire. Then, 30 items were classified into categories and after that they were calculated. These main scores then were added and divided by the whole numbers of the students then multiplied by 100% to get the percentages of students' ability in public speaking. The techniques for analyzing the data consist of the following:

1. Identifying the score

2. Percentage Analysis

According to Sudijono (2017, p.43) claimed that:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = Percentage

F = Frequency that is being sought about the percentage

N = Number of Cases (number of frequencies or number of individual)

The result of the questionnaire obtained by used percentage analysis.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study were the result of questionnaire. As far, the questionnaire were divided in terms of experiencing panic and dread, fearing the fear itself, and negative beliefs about themselves and the audience. Overall the information of the

questionnaire had many difference responses by the students.

1. Experiencing Panic and Dread

Based on data the researchers found that the participants (the students of English Education of *Universitas PGRI Palembang*) have emergence factors of fear of public speaking in term of experiencing panic and dread. It can be seen from the result of questionnaire, overall the negative statements obtained the most percent at agree statement percentage. Therefore, twenty nine students (72,5%) agreed that experiencing panic and dread was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, ten students (25%) strongly agreed that experiencing panic and dread was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, seven students were (17,5%) neutral that experiencing panic and dread was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, thirteen students (32,5%) disagreed that experiencing panic and dread was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, and one student (2,5%) strongly disagreed that experiencing panic and dread was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking. From the results above, it can

be informed that experiencing panic and dread was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking in category feeling shame and feeling alone and perceives something to be a significant danger or threat.

2. Fearing the Fear Itself

Based on data the researchers found that the participants (the students of English Education of *Universitas PGRI Palembang*) have emergence factors of fear of public speaking in term of fearing the fear itself. It can be seen from the result of questionnaire, overall the negative statements obtained the most percent at agree, and true statement percentage. Therefore, twenty six students (65%) agreed that fearing the fear itself was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, seven students (17,5%) strongly agreed that fearing the fear itself was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, six students were (15%) neutral that fearing the fear itself was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, thirteen students (32,5%) disagreed that fearing the fear itself was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, and one student (2,5%) strongly disagreed that fearing

the fear itself was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking. In other responses that thirty three students (82, 5%) chose true, it can be said that the students approved that fearing the fear itself was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking. As well as seven students (17,5%) chose false, it can be said that the students did not approve that fearing the fear itself is one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking. From results above, it can be informed that fearing the fear itself was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking in category pounding heart, trembling/shaking, lightheaded, and fear losing control.

3. Negative Beliefs about Themselves and the Audience

Based on data the researchers found that the participants (the students of English Education of *Universitas PGRI Palembang*) have emergence factors of fear of public speaking in term of negative beliefs about themselves and the audience. It can be seen from the result of questionnaire, overall the negative statements obtained the most percent at agree, and I

completely beliefs about the statement percentage.

Therefore, thirty students (75%) agreed that negative beliefs about themselves and the audience was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, four students (10%) strongly agreed that negative beliefs about themselves and the audience was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, two students (5%) neutral that negative beliefs about themselves and the audience was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, four students (10%) disagreed that negative beliefs about themselves and the audience was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking, and no one chose strongly disagreed. In another responses that thirty four students (85%) chose I completely believe the statement, it can be said that the students completely believed that negative beliefs about themselves and the audience was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking. As well as six students (15%) chose I do not believe the statement at all , it can be said that the students did not believe that negative beliefs about themselves and the audience is one of factors affected

emergence of fear of public speaking. From results above, it can be informed that negative beliefs about themselves and the audience was one of factors affected emergence of fear of public speaking in category negative beliefs about themselves and the audience.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to know the factors that affect the emergence of fear of public speaking. From the findings, it was found that students of English Education of *Universitas PGRI Palembang* had emergence fear of public speaking. As for factors affected the emergence of fear of public speaking, experiencing panic and dread in categories feeling shame and feeling being alone, and then perceives something to be a significant danger or threat. Therefore, fearing at the fear itself in categories for pounding heart, trembling/shaking, lightheaded, numbness, and fear of losing control. As well as negative beliefs about themselves and the audience in categories negative beliefs about themselves and the audience.

It can be concluded that factors affected the emergence of fear of public speaking, there were

experiencing panic and dread in categories feeling shame and feeling being alone, and then perceives something to be a significant danger or threat. The second fearing at the fear itself in categories pounding heart, trembling/shaking, lightheaded, numbness, and fear of losing control, and the last negative beliefs about themselves and the audience in categories negative beliefs about themselves and the audience. Factors affected the emergence of fear of public speaking of students of English Education of *Universitas PGRI Palembang*.

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